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A UNAOC delegation headed by **Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for UNAOC, participated in the third edition of the **Antalya Diplomacy Forum** in Türkiye.

Under the auspices of **H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdogan**, President of the Republic of Türkiye, and on the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, the Forum provided a platform for participants to address the challenging issues shaping the global agenda and to discuss innovative tools to advance diplomacy in times of turmoil.

Heads of states and governments, ministers, diplomats, business leaders, academics, and youth and media representatives gathered at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum for an all-encompassing debate on the overarching theme, **"Advancing Diplomacy in Times of Turmoil"**.



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**H.E. MIGUEL ANGEL MORATINOS**  
Under-Secretary-General,  
High Representative for UNAOC



In a thematic session entitled “**Rising Racism, Xenophobia and Islamophobia**”, the High Representative exchanged viewpoints with other distinguished panellists, including **Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe; **Evren Dağdelen Akgün**, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairpersonship on Combating Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims; **Matteo Mecacci**, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights; and **H.E. Awn Al-Khasawneh**, Former Prime Minister of Jordan. The discussion was moderated by journalist **Maria Ramos** of TRT World.

“Convinced that we are facing an ideological battle, UNAOC chose soft power tools to change hearts and minds through promoting intercultural and interreligious dialogue, and embracing diversity as a richness not as a threat,” explained Mr. Moratinos, adding that, “UNAOC developed and implements cross-cutting programmes on youth, education, media, migration and women [to address the rising tides of hate]...”

He warned: “Hate is back and continues to rise in many ways and forms. The real danger is that racist discourse, bigotry and toxic hate are being promoted quite often by sitting political leaders and prominent personalities... Addressing racism and discrimination based on religion, belief, ethnicity, gender, or culture is not a one-time exercise. Combating such phenomena demands action every day...” (1–3 March)



The UNAOC delegation — led by the High Representative **Mr. Moratinos** and comprised of **Ms. Nihal Saad**, UNAOC Director; and **Mr. Doğan Aşik**, UNAOC Strategic Partnerships Consultant — with **Mr. Taha Bülbül**, Liaison Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye (third from left)



In a lecture at **Başkent University** in Ankara, Türkiye, the High Representative shared details about UNAOC’s efforts to prevent violent extremism and terrorism by addressing their root causes through initiatives that aim to change hearts and minds. “Understanding the complexities underlying conflicts is essential for sustainable conflict resolution. Peace is a profound process. Security governance measures alone will not bring durable peace,” emphasized Mr. Moratinos. The United Nations stands against all forms of religious intolerance and bigotry, including Islamophobia and antisemitism, he added before underscoring the importance of mutual respect and protection of human dignity. (27 February)





## The High Representative Holds Series of Meetings in the Margins of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum



On the margins of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, the High Representative and **H.E. Mr. Ivica Dačić**, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia, discussed means of collaboration on the nations of the Western Balkans and Serbia's potential contributions to UNAOC's mission. (2 March)



The High Representative had a brief side talk with **H.E. Mr. Riyad Al-Maliki**, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the State of Palestine, on the first day of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum. (1 March)



On the sidelines of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, Mr. Moratinos met with **H.E. Mr. Ahmet Yildiz**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye. They discussed enhanced collaboration to achieve common goals and interest. (2 March)



On the margins of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, Mr. Moratinos had a fruitful meeting with **H.E. Waleed Abdulkarim El Khhereiji**, Vice Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, who reiterated the support of Saudi Arabia to UNAOC's work and mandate. (1 March)



USG Moratinos met with **H.E. Shaikh Abdulla Bin Ahmed Bin Abdulla Al Khalifa**, Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Bahrain and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the King Hamad Global Centre for Peaceful Coexistence. (2 March)



On the sidelines of the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, the High Representative had a productive meeting with **H.E. Mr. Francisco Jose Coy Granados**, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Colombia. (2 March)



The High Representative discussed strengthening cooperation on cultural diplomacy with **Mr. Sultan Raev**, Secretary-General of the International Organization of Turkic Culture (TÜRKSOY), which joined the UNAOC Group of Friends in 2023. (1 March)



Mr. Moratinos and **Ms. Marija Pejčinović Burić**, Secretary General of the Council of Europe (CoE), discussed strengthening joint efforts to advance intercultural and interreligious dialogue as well as addressing religious intolerance and bigotry. (2 March)





UNAOC shone a spotlight on 'Dialogue of Civilizations & Tolerance' in a three-day conference in Abu Dhabi organized by the **United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Tolerance and Coexistence** and the **Emirates Scholar Research Center** in collaboration with UNAOC. "We need a new narrative to address the current global context. One that is people-centered focusing on the vulnerable. We need to rebuild trust and restore solidarity. We need to invest in a meaningful dialogue," Mr. Miguel Ángel Moratinos, Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for UNAOC, stated during the high-level opening segment. (19–21 February)



UNAOC Director, **Ms. Nihal Saad**, moderated a discussion on **"Exploring Tolerance in Leadership: Perspectives and Discourse"**, which examined best practices and initiatives that foster tolerance in leadership, including within faith-based organizations, political groups, and civil society.



UNAOC Institutional and Member States Relations Advisor, **Ms. Anna Pavlyuchenko**, chaired a thematic discussion during the event entitled **"Leadership Nexus: Cultivating Tolerance for a Harmonious Tomorrow."**



The UNAOC team also had an opportunity to experience, firsthand, the universality of religious sites and reflect on our common humanity at Abu Dhabi's spectacular **Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque** and the **Abrahamic Family House**, which houses **His Eminence Ahmed El-Tayeb Mosque**, **St. Francis Church**, and **Moses Ben Maimon Synagogue**.





**H.E. Sheikh Nahyan bin Mubarak Al Nahyan**, Minister of Tolerance and Coexistence of the United Arab Emirates, received the High Representative with UNAOC Director Nihal Saad and Institutional and Member States Relations Advisor Anna Pavlyuchenko. They discussed preparations for the IDCT Conference that was organized with the support of UNAOC. (19 February)



On the sidelines of the International Dialogue of Civilizations and Tolerance Conference in Abu Dhabi, Mr. Moratinos exchanged views on public diplomacy, education and pathways to human fraternity with **H.E. Noura Al Kaabi**, Minister of State at the UAE Ministry of Foreign Affairs. (20 February)



The High Representative discussed opportunities for joint collaboration to advance the call for peace and the protection of human values with the Secretary-General of the Muslim Council of Elders, **Judge Mohamed Abdel Salam**, during a meeting in Abu Dhabi on the margins of the IDCT Conference. (19 February)



The Under-Secretary-General and **Ms. Béangère Boëll**, UN Resident Coordinator (UNRC) of the United Arab Emirates, had an insightful discussion on key partnerships and collaborations between UNAOC and the UAE Country Team to foster cultural understanding, tolerance and dialogue. (21 February)



Mr. Moratinos had a substantive meeting with **Mr. Abdullah El Shehhi**, Executive Director of Abrahamic Family House, on areas of cooperation to advance interfaith dialogue, understanding and shared values. The meeting occurred following a visit to the interfaith complex, located on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi. (21 February)



On the margins of the IDCT Conference in Abu Dhabi, Mr. Moratinos met with retired **Ambassador Marc Sievers**, Director of the American Jewish Committee (AJC) Abu Dhabi; **Mr. Jason Isaacson**, AJC Chief Policy and Political Affairs Officer; **Mr. Benjamin Rogers**, AJC Director of Middle East and North Africa initiatives; and **Ms. Reva Gorelick**, AJC Inaugural Program Director. (21 February)



## International Holocaust Remembrance Day



In commemoration of the **International Holocaust Remembrance Day**, the High Representative joined a delegation of the European Jewish Association and other officials in a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau. USG Moratinos paid tribute to the Holocaust victims and reflected on the profound impact of the experience in [his blog](#), *Convivencia*. On the margins of his visit to Auschwitz, the High Representative addressed the Symposium on Antisemitism in Europe organized by the European Jewish Association. (23 January)



Mr. Moratinos discussed opportunities for collaboration in advancing tolerance, mutual respect and religious freedom with **H.E. Mr. Radosław Sikorski**, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland, at a meeting in Warsaw, Poland. (23 January)



USG Moratinos exchanged views on actions to combat antisemitism with **Ambassador Deborah Lipstadt**, US Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, at a meeting in New York City. They then attended the 2024 Observance of the International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust at UNHQ. (26 January)



UNAOC attended the United Nations memorial ceremony to mark the **International Day of Commemoration in memory of the victims of the Holocaust** at the UN General Assembly Hall at the UN Headquarters in New York. (26 January)





In commemoration of the **International Day of Human Fraternity**, UNAOC organized a virtual event for Member States, religious leaders, faith actors, and civil society representatives. The event was co-sponsored by the **Permanent Missions of the UAE** and the **Arab Republic of Egypt** to the UN.

In his opening remarks, **Under-Secretary-General Miguel Ángel Moratinos**, High Representative for UNAOC, recalled the Document on "Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together", which was co-authored and launched by **His Holiness Pope Francis** and **His Eminence the Grand Imam of Al-Azha Sheikh Ahmed El Tayeb** in Abu Dhabi in 2019.

"At the core of the Document is a genuine call for meaningful dialogues rather than monologues among people regardless of their diversity. There is also an emphasis on the role and responsibility of religious and political leaders alike to 'bring an end to wars, conflicts, and environmental destruction and the rejection of all forms of violence, discrimination and extremism in the name of religion'... Those are not mere aspirations. There is a reason to be optimistic even amid the darkness permeating the global scene," the High Representative emphasized.

In a message read by the High Representative, **United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres** underscored that, "We must come together to protect and uphold human rights, combat hate speech and violent extremism, and push back against those who profit from fear. We can take inspiration from the Document on 'Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together'". (5 February)



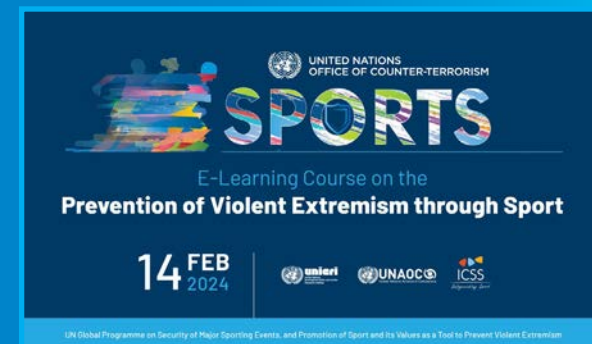




**“** *UNAOC remains committed to speaking out against offensive discourse and continues to work with relevant stakeholders to advance dialogue, mutual respect, diversity and pluralism as important elements in promoting cooperation and in preventing violent extremism as and when conducive to terrorism.”*

**MS. NIHAL SAAD**  
Director, UNAOC

At a special event commemorating **International Day for the Prevention of Violent Terrorism as and when Conducive to Terrorism**, UNAOC Director **Ms. Nihal Saad** reaffirmed UNAOC’s commitment to advancing dialogue, mutual respect and diversity as important elements in the effort to prevent and counter violent extremism. As Vice-Chair of the **Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Committee Working Group on Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism**, which organized the special event, Ms. Saad pointed out: “The New Agenda for Peace puts a new emphasis on prevention. It presents a view of prevention that addresses violence in all its forms and at all levels.” Representatives from the UN system – including Working Group chair UN Office of Counter-Terrorism and vice-chairs UN Development Programme, UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization – joined Member States, civil society, academia as well as faith and youth leaders at the virtual event. (12 February)



UNAOC Director **Ms. Nihal Saad** applauded the launch of an e-learning course on the Prevention of Violent Extremism (PVE) as “an important milestone” in the **UN Global Sports Programme on the Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sport and Its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism**. At a virtual event to launch the e-course and mark International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism, Ms. Saad explained: “The online course provides a continuous learning opportunity to a broad range of stakeholders... by offering evidence-based practice and a range of PVE and sport-for-PVE toolkits and resources. This new platform can be a virtual space for cross-sector collaboration, which is important for sustainable efforts for PVE through sport.” The UN Global Sports Programme is led by the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism, which will host the e-course on its online platform, and co-implemented by UNAOC, the UN Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the International Centre for Sport Security. (14 February)



**Ms. Zulaika Nanfuka**, Muslim Youth Development Forum (Uganda), YSF Recipient



**Mr. Mimoun Berrissoun**, 180 Grad Wende (Germany), IIH Recipient

The event highlighted the impact of PVE programming at the community level and featured inputs from the following beneficiaries of UNAOC programmes: **UNAOC Youth Solidarity Fund** recipient **Ms. Zulaika Nanfuka** of Uganda Muslim Youth Development Forum; and, **Mr. Mimoun Berrissoun** of Germany’s 180 Grad Wende, who is a recipient of the **Intercultural Innovation Hub**, a UNAOC-BMW Group initiative.





The High Representative joined **H.E. Mr. Zhang Jun**, the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations, and other esteemed leaders of the UN diplomatic community and New York City, to usher in the Year of the Dragon as an honoured guest of **The Night of Lunar New Year Gala** hosted by CCTV United Nations and CGTN America.

The special occasion was an opportunity to “rekindle our hope for humanity in light of the spirit generated by Lunar New Year”, Mr. Moratinos enthused in remarks at the event, pointing out that: “The dragon symbolizes strength, courage and wisdom – the qualities the world needs while facing unprecedented crises.” (26 January)



The UNAOC Director emphasized the use of interfaith dialogue as a viable tool for peace and pointed out that all religions share the values of humility and mutual respect during a panel discussion entitled, **“Fostering Peace Through Faith, The Power of Partnerships”**.

The discussion was part of the launch, by the Khalili Foundation and the Commonwealth Secretariat, of the multi-year **Commonwealth Faith Festival** that took place online and in London, England and that aims to promote peace throughout the 56 Member States of the Commonwealth. (9 February)







In remarks delivered by video at the high-level opening session of the **“Beyond War and Toward Reconciliation: Multi-Religious Peace Roundtable”**, the High Representative highlighted the important role religious leaders and faith-based organizations play in cultivating mutual respect and building bridges between and among their communities. Supported by UNAOC and organized by Religions for Peace International and Religions for Peace Japan, the **Second Tokyo Peace Roundtable** brought diverse religious and faith leaders, policymakers, and policy experts together to explore innovative approaches to effective peacebuilding and the impact of interfaith actions on global challenges. (19–21 February)



The UNAOC Director, **Ms. Nihal Saad**, underscored the importance of African-led solutions and collaboration, innovation and flexibility by stakeholders at all levels in response to the evolving threat of violent extremism during the **10th UN Global Counter-Terrorism Coordination Compact Committee Meeting**. Speaking on the second day of the Meeting, which focused on the Strategic Coordination of Counter-Terrorism Initiatives in Africa, Ms. Saad pointed out that UNAOC has long recognized the value of complementarity with civil society organizations. She noted UNAOC's efforts to do just that through its Youth Solidarity Fund, Intercultural Innovation Hub, and within the framework of the UN Global Programme on Security of Major Sporting Events and Promotion of Sports and its Values as a Tool to Prevent Violent Extremism (24–25 January)



UNAOC participated in a meeting on **Human Rights and Sexual and Gender Diversity in the World**, held in Mérida, Spain, that focused on the need to advance the inclusion of sexual and gender diversity on the international cooperation agenda. The meeting was organized by Fundación Triángulo with the support of Agencia de Extremadura de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo of Junta de Extremadura (AEXCID). (29 February – 1 March)





The High Representative received the new Permanent Representative of the Republic of Uzbekistan to the UN, **H.E. Mr. Ulugbek Lapasov**, at UNAOC headquarters in New York City. They discussed joint collaboration between UNAOC and Uzbekistan. (19 January)



The Under-Secretary-General discussed mutual collaboration between UNAOC and the Government of Iraq with **Dr. Abbas Kadhom Obaid**, Charge d'Affairs of the Permanent Mission of Iraq to the UN, at a meeting at UNAOC headquarters in New York City. (19 January)



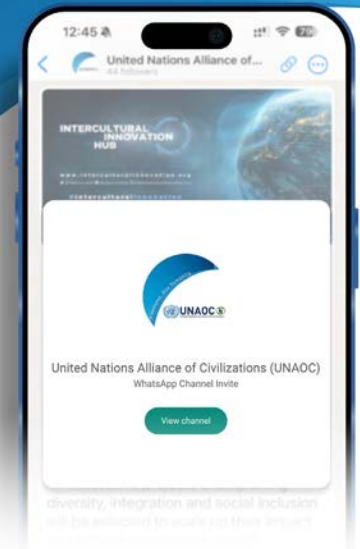
The High Representative had a productive discussion on the ongoing collaboration and partnership between UNAOC and UNOPS with **Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jorge Moreira da Silva**, Executive Director of the UN Office for Project Services, at the UNAOC headquarters in New York City. (31 January)



At a meeting in New York City, Mr. Moratinos exchanged views on best practices in combating religious intolerance and safeguarding religious sites with **Dr. Nasaruddin Umar**, Grand Imam of Masjid Istiqlal, and **Ari M. Gordon**, PhD, American Jewish Committee (AJC) Director of Muslim-Jewish Relations. (2 February)



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UNAOC's global Call to Action **#forSafeWorship** to safeguard religious sites and worshipers worldwide is in full swing!

This new UNAOC communications campaign engages the global community in taking concrete actions to contribute to implementing the UN Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, developed by UNAOC.

Visit [www.forsafeworship.org](http://www.forsafeworship.org) for a chance to watch inspiring multimedia stories from across the globe, and make sure to submit your own story about your special sacred place!



## HIGHLIGHTS



UNAOC participated in the **9th Geneva Interfaith Dialogue** at the Palais des Nations in Geneva. The meeting, co-organized by the Permanent Mission of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the UN in Geneva and the UN Institute for Training and Research, brought together a diverse panel of Ambassadors and high-level representatives from the world's major faiths who participated in a panel discussion on "Common Human Values in Multilateral Diplomacy". The Geneva Interfaith Dialogues are organized yearly in the context of the World Interfaith Harmony Week. UNAOC was represented by the Senior Representative of UNAOC Geneva office, **Mr. Hakan Kivanç**. (9 February)



**Mr. Hakan Kivanç**, Senior Representative of UNAOC Geneva office, discussed opportunities for collaboration with Globethics' Executive Director **Mr. Fadi Daou**. Amb. Kivanç reiterated UNAOC's commitment to promoting global citizenship education, youth engagement, and ethical AI. (29 January)



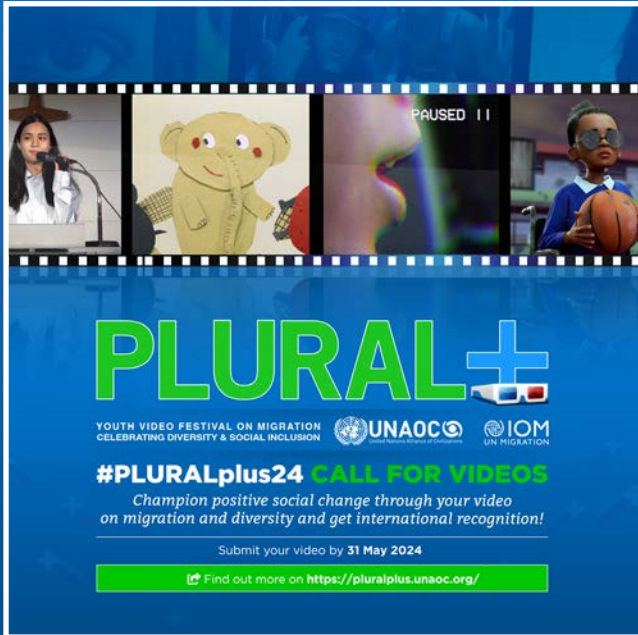
During an Executive Briefing on the activities of the **University for Peace (UPEACE)**, UPEACE's Permanent Observer, **Ambassador David Fernández Puyana**, highlighted the institutional importance of UNAOC, including its capacity to act as a convener and facilitator for sustainable peacebuilding, to provide effective educational resources and to strengthen the role of women as mediators. UNAOC was represented at the meeting by the Senior Representative of the UNAOC Geneva office, **Mr. Hakan Kivanç**. (30 January)



The Senior Representative of UNAOC Geneva office, **Mr. Hakan Kivanç**, shared UNAOC's efforts to promote constructive narratives about migration and highlighted UNAOC's long-standing partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in carrying out the annual PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival at the **14th Global Forum on Migration and Development (GFMD)**. (23–25 January)



## UNAOC Opportunities and Calls for Applications



Embracing the transformative power of storytelling, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) have opened the application period for the 2024 edition of the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**, inviting global youth to submit short videos on pressing social issues.

This year, PLURAL+ will continue to illuminate the enduring themes of migration, diversity, and social inclusion, while also spotlighting two special categories focusing on combating xenophobia and fostering inclusive climate action.

PLURAL+ 2024 International Jury Distinctions will be presented to three videos for each age category (12 years old and under; 13 to 17 years old; and 18 to 25 years old). Additionally, UNAOC and IOM will confer two **Special Recognitions on “Combating Xenophobia and Discrimination” and “Inclusive Action on Climate Migration”**.

The **deadline to submit videos** to the 16th edition of PLURAL+ is **Friday, 31 May, at 11:59 EDT** (New York time).

Full details and eligibility criteria are available here: <https://pluralplus.unaoc.org/submit/rules/>

The 2024 cycle of the **Intercultural Innovation Hub (IIH)** is now open. UNAOC and BMW Group invite applications from grassroots organizations that are championing inclusion. Selected recipients receive funding and capacity-building support and become members of a community of global changemakers. The **deadline to apply is 1 April**. The IIH of UNAOC and the BMW Group, with the support of Accenture, connects people and cultures, empowers grassroots organizations and elevates intercultural innovation. Innovative projects championing diversity, integration and social inclusion will be selected to scale up their impact and achieve sustainable growth. Participants of the Hub will benefit from a **financial grant of up to US\$20,000** in addition to a comprehensive capacity-building program, international workshops, customized support and mentorship, as well as membership to an exclusive global platform.

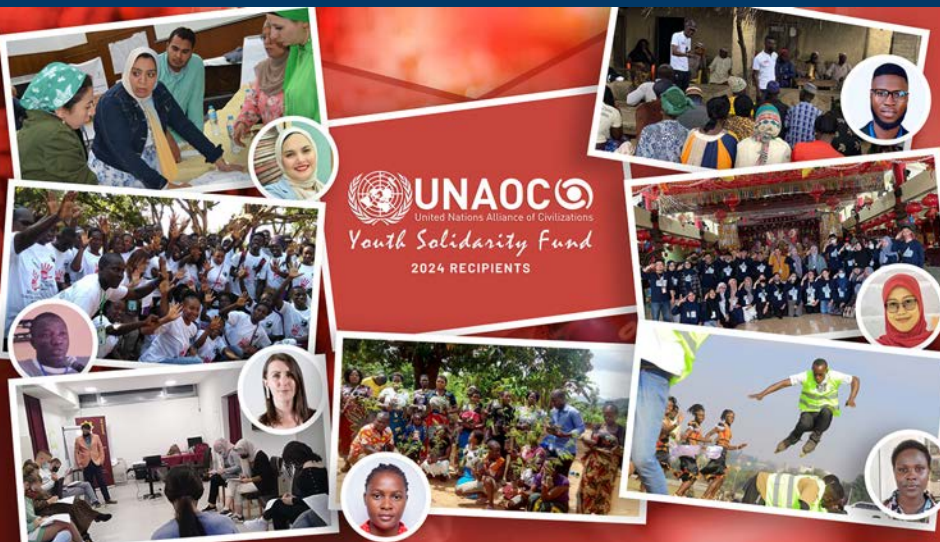
Learn more by visiting:

<https://www.interculturalinnovation.org/application-process/>





## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS



UNAOC announced the selection of seven youth-led organizations as recipients of its **Youth Solidarity Fund (YSF)** after a rigorous evaluation process of **more than 600 submitted applications**. The projects, implemented by the YSF 2024 recipients, will contribute to the promotion of peaceful societies based on creative approaches to building peaceful communities through intercultural and interreligious dialogue. The recipients originate from almost every corner of the globe, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Malawi, Sierra Leone and Uganda. Each YSF recipient receives funding, capacity-building and mentorship support throughout the programme cycle. The seven YSF 2024 recipients join a group of 73 other youth-led organizations that have benefited from YSF since its inception in 2008. (22 January)

Learn more: <https://www.unaoc.org/what-we-do/grants-and-competitions/youth-solidarity-fund/>

UNAOC launched the **7th edition** of its **Young Peacebuilders (YPB)** programme, welcoming a new cohort from **Latin America and the Caribbean** that includes **18 participants** from Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Mexico, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela as well as three participants from Spain.

The young peacebuilders have embarked on an experience-based learning process that will provide them with the competencies to advance diversity and intercultural understanding.

The 7th edition of YPB programme is implemented with the generous financial support of Agencia de Extremeña de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo. (11 January)

Learn more: <https://www.unaoc.org/what-we-do/projects-and-initiatives/young-peacebuilders>



Twenty-five women peace mediators from the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Mali gathered for the 16th online meeting of the **UNAOC Women's Alliance for Peace** network. The participants shared insights from their respective local contexts and discussed their mutual goals of increasing awareness and mobilizing grassroots action in response to violence, insecurity, and widespread disinformation. (27 February)





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